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Cannibals of the Adelbert Mountains

INTRODUCTION

STEALTHY raiding parties, silently speeding arrows, sudden pain, screaming death, shrieking warriors, cannibal feasts—these are the scenes which have prevailed for hundreds of years in the mountain fastnesses of the Adelbert Range on the northeast coast of New Guinea. Through the almost impenetrable jungle which clothes its rugged terrain has been stalking the dark spirit of terrible fear, dogging the footsteps of its brown-skinned inhabitants, filling their lives with the fear of ambush by lurking enemies, the dread of retaliation by relatives of murder victims, the terror of evil spirits and the gnawing suspicion that even outward friends may be plotting to snatch one's soul and put it to a miserable death by sorcery. What a forbidding abode of horror these mountains have been for countless generations!

The Prince of Peace has entered this stronghold of heathendom and by His Word has broken Satan's reign of terror in many parts of the Adelbert Mountains. It has been my privilege to be one of the heralds of the Prince of Peace in this area. I should like to tell what I have seen of His conquering power in that land.

R. INSELMANN.

CHRIST CONQUERS CANNIBALS

THE COUNTRY

THE ADELBERT MOUNTAINS lie northwest of Madang, the village where the headquarters of Lutheran Mission Madang are located. This mountain range covers a small area in comparison with the larger mountain ranges of New Guinea such as the Bismarck Mountains and the Central Range. Its highest peaks do not reach far beyond 5000 feet above sea level, less than one-third the height of some New Guinea peaks. However, no one who has traveled in the Adelbert Mountains will ever wish to climb over more difficult terrain, especially since in the greater part of this area no roads or trails of any kind are to be found. The absence of trails is due to the ever present hostilities among the various tribes. Only near the coast and as far inland as the mission is working have trails been made by the natives.

The Adelbert Mountain range only covers an area of about thirty by sixty miles, but in traveling through it one can easily more than double the mileage on account of the ruggedness and the absence of paths. Furthermore, one can travel for weeks at a time without finding more than a small number of villages, only a fraction of the total number hidden on the mountain slopes and in the mountain bowls.

The chief animals which roam these mountains and canyons are the wild pig and the wallaby. There are also several kinds of large game birds of which the cassowary and the hornbill are most important.

Animal Life Wild pigs are very numerous and are for this reason a constant menace to native gardens. They are

the same kind of pig as the domestic village pig, except the domestic pig is tame because of the care it receives from the native woman, especially when small. Domestic pigs often become pets of the household. Natives keep no boars. Their pigs interbreed with the wild boar. The latter is a furious fighter, especially when attacked. He is equipped with sharp, curved tusks. When he is angry the bristles on his back stand on end and his mouth foams with rage. The native who kills this animal with spear or arrows, sometimes assisted by dogs, has reason to take pride in his hunting prowess. The native hunter often is severely wounded or even killed by the charging boar. Dogs are also in danger of injury or death whenever they attack one of these vicious beasts.

The wallaby of New Guinea is a small kangaroo. It may weigh as much as twenty-five pounds. It feeds on grass, herbs and roots. Its meat, which is eaten by the natives, resembles that of rabbits.

Bird Life The cassowary, akin to the emu of Australia, is a large land bird. In size it is second only to the ostrich, the largest of living birds. The cassowary, often weighing one hundred and fifty pounds or more, is too heavy to climb the rugged mountains and therefore has chosen the large river valleys as its habitat. However, a lighter species of cassowary is found in the mountains of the Adelbert Range. This bird has long, powerful legs. The inside toe is tipped with a horny spike shaped like a spearpoint four or five inches long. With this weapon the cassowary stabs its attacking enemy, whether man or dog. The head of the cassowary is surmounted by a bony, helmet-like crest which is larger and higher in male birds. The adult bird is black and has brightly colored lobes on the head and neck.

The hornbill derives its name from its enormous horn-shaped bill which has a series of transverse ridges on its upper surface. The bird may weigh up to eight pounds. For its brooding place it selects a hollow tree trunk. While the mother bird sits on the nest the male bird seals up the opening to the tree nest, leaving

only a small hole large enough for head and neck through which the male feeds the female while she hatches the eggs.

Very common in the Adellbert Mountains is the bird of paradise which is noted for the beauty of the plumage of the male. Several decades ago this gorgeous bird, of which there are many varieties, was in danger of extinction at the hands of hunters who killed it for the feathers which were shipped in large quantities



The author and his native built home at Magila

to Europe and to America to decorate ladies' hats. Now it is illegal to kill a bird of paradise.

The mountain area from the divide to the ocean is more or less under control of the government and has to some extent been missionized by both the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Missions.

Cannibal The inland side of the divide, facing the Ramu
Country River valley, is largely uncontrolled and not missionized. However, at two different places on that side the Lutheran Mission is at work; these are the fields of the Bunabun and Nobonob congregations. As missionary of the Nobonob congregation I grew quite familiar with its field, especially since I made my home in an outpost station of this cannibal country for nearly a year.



THE PEOPLE

THE PEOPLE of this area belong to the brown-skinned, fuzzy-haired race and are cannibals. Their heathen religion is animism; that is, they believe that soul-matter is present in every particle of the body, in anything that has been in contact with the

body and also in all animals and even in inanimate objects. According to this belief acquiring the soul-matter of another person gives one strength. This accounts for the origin of their practice of cannibalism. Having tasted human flesh, they developed a liking for it, and being short of animal meat, their longing for protein in their diet turned to a craving for human flesh. John G. Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides, substantiates the cannibal's taste for human meat by quoting the words of a cannibal, "When so many children are being killed, why do they not send one for food to me and my family?"* Similarly, cannibals from Magila village in the Adelbert Mountains told me that human flesh was tastier and more tender than cassowary meat.

The whole life of these people is governed by fear. They are afraid of spirits to whose evil powers they are exposed, even when in the home village, but much more when in the woods. They put

the souls of the departed in the same category with these evil spirits, especially the souls of those who during their lifetime were in possession of powerful sorcery. The spirits of the slain are also believed to prowl about the village as long as they have not been avenged. Fear of spirits keeps women from leaving the village compound after dark.

*John G. Paton, *Missionary to the New Hebrides. An Autobiography*, Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1907, p. 341.

The cannibals of the Adelbert Mountains are afraid of sorcery. Death sorcery is feared above all. Because of the belief that soul-matter is present in every part of the body and also in anything that has touched the body, the heathen native

Fear of Sorcery must constantly guard against losing any of his soul-matter. To capture a person's soul the enemy must take something which has been the property of his intended victim. It may be a particle of food left over from his meal, the peeling of a betelnut which he has cracked open with his teeth, a hair from his head, a sweet-scented leaf which he has worn under his armband, or any similar article which is thought to contain his soul-matter. Finding such an object, the sorcerer wraps it in leaves or puts it into a joint of bamboo and slowly smokes it over a fire to the accompaniment of certain charms and rituals. It is believed that as the article will dry up and wither in the smoke, so the former owner will become ill, his body will gradually wither away, and finally he will die.

On my way to New Guinea I met a medical doctor and professor who told me about his experience in regard to the fear of death sorcery found among the natives there. While he was living at Madang many years ago he was called to minister to two natives who were ill and believed themselves under the spell of death sorcery. His examination revealed that there was nothing physically wrong with them, so he said to them, "Forget about your foolish fear; there's nothing wrong with you. Get up and eat and go to work and you'll be all right." Nevertheless, both of his patients died. So great is the power of this awful fear of death sorcery that it kills its victims merely through auto-suggestion.

Is there no hope, then, for people who are caught in the grip of this terrible fear? Most certainly there is. God's Word tells us (Heb. 2:15) that Christ came into this world to redeem those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He does that today for these fear-haunted people of New Guinea as I have repeatedly experienced.

During my stay in New Guinea a native woman of the village of Gal, not far from Madang, came to believe that she was under the spell of death sorcery. She laid herself down to die, having abandoned all hope. She would not eat nor drink. Most of the time she yelled hysterically in fear. The Christian elders and I admonished her to put her faith in Christ, for Christ had redeemed her and had made her His child in baptism. As she listened to these words of comfort, confidence in her Savior again entered her heart. A great calm descended upon her, for the power of fear was broken by the greater power of faith. She began to realize her sin in not putting her trust in her Savior. She gave her heart again to Jesus and soon regained her health.



Scene in a cannibal village

A fear almost equal to that of death sorcery is the fear of *sanguma*.^{*} It is a commonly held belief that the enemy can change at will into the form of an animal, into a crocodile, a wild pig or a wallaby. This power of transformation into animals is known as *sanguma*. (Some natives believe that the enemy does not actually change into an animal, but that he only appears to others in the form of an animal.) Because of *sanguma* the native is never sure when hunting or walking in the forest whether the wild pig or other animal he sees is really only an animal or his enemy in disguise. If a native shoots at a pig or cassowary and fails to kill it, *sanguma* is often suspected. Especially is this the case when the native is attacked and injured by the wild boar which he has wounded. If it happens that a native takes sick with malaria or some other disease upon his return from the hunt, he is sure that the animal which he saw in the forest was his enemy in disguise. He is convinced that in some mysterious way the enemy has shot an arrow, or even a stone, into his body. Natives have died of fear because they believed in *sanguma* sorcery.

Time and time again heathen natives were afraid to be our guides on mission trips because of their fear of *sanguma*. Our guides frequently led us in a round about route to the next village, explaining, "*Sanguma* footprints have been seen on the direct route, so we can't take you that way."

Much of the time and energy of the inhabitants of the Adelbert Range is spent in warfare. The underlying motive for most of the warfare is revenge for the death of a fellow tribesman, either one who has been killed in a previous fight or one who has died of what we would call natural causes, but which the heathen think to be the power of death sorcery performed by the suspected village. Other

^{*}Also spelled "sangguma." In the native language "ng" is one letter and when reproducing the "ng" in English when followed by another "g" one "g" is sometimes dropped.

causes of war may be the kidnapping of women, the theft of vegetables from the gardens or the shooting of a pig belonging to someone else. The ancestral spirits demand retaliation for an injury done the tribe and the people must honor these tribal laws. So the living are ruled by the dead.

There are various ways of fighting. The most common is the raid just before dawn when the villagers still sleep and are unaware of the approaching enemy. Shortly before I left Magila in February 1943, natives from neighboring villages went on such a raid, killed fifteen people and ate them. Attacking warriors frequently resort to ambush along a jungle path. Another mode of warfare is the pitched battle on common grounds set aside for this purpose. Such battle fields are to be found in some parts of the Adelbert Mountains.

All strangers are considered enemies. Fear of sorcery and of the spirits prevents the heathen from venturing far from home. He does not trust people living beyond the next village. In fact, anyone who is not a member of one's own tribe

Enemies is, by virtue of that fact, an enemy. However, occasionally two tribes may be allied temporarily against a common enemy. Mistrust within the tribe or the clan often leads to bloodshed. With so many enemies arrayed against him, the heathen must be prepared at all times to protect himself. Therefore, whenever he ventures forth from his village, he never fails to carry bow and arrow, spear and shield—even if he is just going to visit the neighboring village or going to work in his garden.

The continual state of war existing in these mountains results in a high death toll. Men, women and children are slain in pitched battles, raids or from ambush. Many deaths are due to sickness; these people have no knowledge of bacteria,

Death contagion, sanitation nor of the common rules of hygiene. Sorcery and evil spirits are thought to cause all deaths other than those by violence. Almost invariably some enemy village is blamed for every death of whatever cause. Even

the death of some feeble, old person is often followed by the death of one or more members of an enemy village through the vengeance of the bereaved relatives. So the death toll of fear and superstition reaches staggering proportions. The fear that a proposed raid may be unsuccessful because of lack of manpower often deters a group from undertaking it or causes the raid to be postponed indefinitely. No doubt this fact has spared the inhabitants of large areas of New Guinea from total annihilation through warfare.

Various modes of burial are in use. Some corpses are buried in the dirt floor of the house; some in the woods. Others are wrapped in mats and are kept in the house for a time. Some are placed on scaffolds near the village or even within the village. Usually the skulls and the jawbones, especially of those who were outstanding warriors and headmen, are saved. These are thought to contain much soul-matter of the deceased person and, therefore, to exert great magic power on behalf of the descendant who owns them.



CONTACTING CANNIBALS

EVERY YEAR during the dry season representatives of the Nobo-nob congregation and their missionary make trips into cannibal territory to establish contact with the people, to gain their confidence and friendship. Such a trip requires from two to four

weeks. Some men volunteer and others are chosen by the Christian elders to accompany the missionary. The most necessary things for such a trip are trade articles, medicine, two

Travel storm lanterns and sufficient kerosene. For himself the missionary must take some changes of clothing, two or three blankets or a sleeping bag and a mosquito net. He usually takes a little food such as toasted bread (fresh bread will soon become moldy), tinned butter, tea or coffee, a little sugar and salt, a few tins of baked beans and a tin or two of breakfast food, usually oatmeal or a similar cereal. These items enable the missionary to have a little variety in his diet. The bulk of his food, however, is purchased from natives in the villages which he visits. For the twenty or more natives in the party the missionary buys food along the way, the bartering being done with the assistance of the Christian natives. Within the Christian area natives give food to the mission party free of charge. The missionary also takes a rifle and a shotgun with him so he may shoot wild game for meat. Occasionally a pig can be purchased from the heathen natives.

Everything which is taken along on the trip must be packed into tins which are carried in rucksacks. These tins are empty five gallon kerosene containers. Christian natives do the carrying. Occasionally heathen also assist—for pay. On account of the mountainous country and the warm, humid climate, packs are usually limited to about twenty-two pounds.

At the beginning of the journey the party travels through

Christian territory or through areas occupied by Christian evangelists where the people strive to keep trails in fairly good condition, but even here the party travels in single file.

Travel This New Guinea style of travel is due to the
Difficulties extreme narrowness of tracks and paths. When the last outpost of Christian influence (the evangelists' station farthest from the main station) has been left behind, travel difficulties increase enormously. It is then that the

party, still marching single file, closes the gaps between individuals and moves in a compact line. This is due to possible danger from hostile natives and to the possibility of losing each other in the dense and often pathless jungle. Paths, if any, are generally very bad, leading up and down steep mountain slopes. Waterways are followed where no other paths exist. Along jungle paths in heathen territory camouflaged pits are a constant danger. These pits are dug by the natives to trap the wild pig, the wallaby and

various small animals. An enemy on the run is also liable to fall into one of them. The floor of the pit is usually studded with a dozen or more sharp, spear-like points imbedded in the ground. On two occasions while we were on such trips native guides fell into pits; one was severely wounded by the sharp points in the pit and later died from resulting infection.

There are thousands of leeches along the mountain paths. Hungrily they await the chance to contact the traveler's leg and gorge themselves on his blood. On every mountain trip natives



Crossing streams in this fashion is a part of a missionary's travel problems

Leeches

and missionary must be on the alert for these slimy creatures. During a few hours of walking a person may lose as much as a pint of blood in this way if he did not constantly scrape off the leeches attached to his legs.



Native warrior in full dress

Dense underbrush often stops the whole party and a path has to be cut through the jungle growth of vines and

thorns with long

Dense knives. Since the country is ex-

Jungle tremely moun-

Growth tainous there are

many rivers and creeks to be crossed. If necessary a tree or two may be felled across a rain-swollen creek to form a bridge. Waterfalls often obstruct the way when the party is using the waterway as a road; dangerous climbing to bypass the falls is encountered. Mountains are so steep that the missionary must use both hands and feet to scale the precipitous slopes.

Usually the native village is located halfway up the mountain slope. Sometimes it is hidden in a mountain bowl, totally isolated and far from other villages. Some of the villages are fortified by stockades.

When the mission party

approaches a cannibal village double precaution is necessary. We walk to the village in silence to take the people by surprise lest they run away and the long, tedious trip be in vain. When the people discover our presence they usually try to flee into the jungle. To prevent this our guides and evangelists call

First to the people, "Don't be afraid! We are of the mission!

Contact We want to pay you a friendly visit!" This assurance

may not have the desired effect, especially if the people know little or nothing about the mission or if they have recently taken part in a cannibal raid for which they are expecting retribution. If they are bold enough they may attack after a few hours when they have had a chance to call their friends from neighboring villages to assist them. We always try to avoid a conflict if at all possible, preferring to withdraw rather than to defend ourselves in an armed encounter. If the people remain in the village or if they come back after their first fright, trading for food is usually begun at once.

The heathen native who sees a white man for the first time is very shy and restless in his presence. He is greatly frightened and is unable to look him in the eye. By signs and a friendly attitude we attempt to reassure the villagers and they gradually come to feel more at ease. Generally only men show up at first on our initial visit to a village. When the men have gained sufficient confidence they call to their women and children to come back out of the jungle.

The sole purpose of the first visit is to gain the friendship of the people. After we have traded with them and have stayed over night in their village the people become more friendly and at our departure ask us to return. They also pick a few guides to show us the way to their friends in the next village. There the same difficulty of making contact has to be lived through once more.

On subsequent trips, when these cannibals have come to trust us a little, we tell them the real purpose of our visits. We explain that we should like to place some of our young men in their

Placing Evangelists

midst to live among them, to help them and to teach them many things for their benefit. They are usually very eager to have these evangelists come to live with them. At times, a village, having learned of the mission from others, ask of their own free will that evangelists be given them. Naturally, since they know nothing of the Word of God, it is not any appreciation of that Word which prompts them to ask for evangelists. In the beginning they are much attracted by the trade articles. In fact, when trading with them precaution is always necessary. The isolated savages, accustomed only to their pitifully primitive implements, are especially eager for the wonderful things the white man possesses, things such as knives, axes, loin-cloths, matches, beads, razor blades and similar items. It is best not to display in a heathen village all the articles which one has, lest the sight should arouse such greed in the people that they would attempt obtaining the things by force. Most likely it is this greed for the white man's goods which usually causes their ready acceptance of the evan-



A native built church

gelists, for they feel that closer contact with the mission will make such things more readily available for them. Of course, we can hardly expect their motives to be Christian at this stage. We are glad to find them eager for evangelists from whatever motive, because we know that in a few years the lives and words of the evangelists will have brought them treasures far greater than mere articles of trade.

In 1941 two of the villages where we had placed evangelists were burned down by enemies. In the one village a man was speared to death and two persons were severely wounded. The surviving villagers fled into the jungle and hid like wild animals. They were afraid to build another village. When they asked us to report their enemies to the government we reminded them that only a few years ago they had been doing the same sort of thing; that they had been cannibals, had engaged in warfare and death sorcery. We suggested that they come with us to visit their enemies—something which they would not have done before contact with Christianity, unless it would have been to avenge themselves. Their response to our suggestion shows how profoundly the Word of God had already changed their lives. Two of their men went with us on our next trip to visit those who had killed one of their men!

The murderers were not contacted, however, on that occasion. Long before we reached their village the people fled into the jungle and there they remained. As a token of our sincerity I sent each of the two chiefs of the enemy tribe a small present consisting of one box of matches, one razor blade and one handful of coarse salt. In order to let them know the exact time of our next coming, I sent them a native type of calendar—a length of vine with nine knots tied in it. These things were taken from village to village by different natives until the enemies were reached. They were told by the messenger to untie one knot each morning. On the day they untied the last knot they should expect the mission party.

Warfare Interrupts the Work

Peace Mission

They should not be afraid and run away again. The mission was coming as a friend.

The next time we called they were at home waiting for us. While still a considerable distance from the first enemy village their shouted welcome greeted us, "O fele, Mission!" (Hello,

Mission!) They were greatly surprised when they saw with us the men whose homes they had destroyed and whose brother they had killed.

Reconciliation

They felt deeply ashamed and told us they had been hired by another village to wipe out that particular village and its inhabitants. We gained their confidence and friendship. Shortly before I had to leave New Guinea the Nobonob congregation sent them two evangelists. When they heard they were getting evangelists they promptly planted food for them and also started building them a house. Thus fierce savages are turned from being enemies to friends by the power of Christian love.

On another mission trip in 1942 our party came to a forsaken village where five people had been murdered shortly before. The bodies of the slain were still lying in one of the houses. As we

left this deserted village and its scene of horror and were proceeding on our way, we suddenly came upon the survivors of the village hiding in the jungle. Mere chance could never account

A Gruesome Find

for our meeting; normally it would be impossible even to catch a glimpse of these terribly frightened creatures, for they were ready to flee for their lives at the slightest sound. Certainly the Lord guided us to them. When they saw us approach they froze in their tracks, afraid to move and trembling with fear. We used the one word, "Mission," and I presented a box of matches to the old chief. That broke the ice and they began to smile.

We stayed over night with them in the jungle and the next day one of their young warriors guided us through the jungle to their friends in the next village. About a month later I received the following message from them, "We are tired of everlasting

warfare. We would like to live in peace as you mission people do. Please send us two evangelists. They shall teach us the new way."

The people of New Guinea are not coerced by our Lutheran Mission to accept evangelists. Of their own free will they may decide for or against us. Often they ask us to send them evangelists even before they have been approached on the subject by the mission.



Native "Chruch Bell"—a hollowed-out log beaten with a stick

BRAVE EVANGELISTS

THE EVANGELIST'S first task is to learn the language of the people to whom he is sent. However, he is not supposed to preach to them as soon as he knows enough of their language. He is simply to live a Christian life with his family. Since he shows himself

The Evangelist's Task

unafraid of sorcery, abstains from magic and from pagan dances, and refuses to join the villagers on the war path, they soon begin to question him, "Why is your life so different from ours?" They also inquire, "What is the meaning of your morning and evening devotions with your family?" Then the evangelist begins to testify of his new faith and to tell them the message of peace. If the people are eager to hear more of this strange, new message, all the people of the village will begin, upon his advice, to meet once or twice a week in the mornings before they go to work in their gardens. Thus catechetical instruction begins. Soon Sunday services also will be conducted. Usually two evangelists are sent out together to one community. In due time a teacher also is sent by the home congregation to gather the children for instruction in a village school. So the work of bringing the Word of God to benighted cannibals progresses, slowly but surely, until they, too, come to be children of God and some day send their own young men out to other heathen villages—not to kill and to destroy, but to bring the message of peace.

To go thus unarmed and alone to treacherous, bloodthirsty people, to live among those whose attitude toward strangers is one of fear, hatred and suspicion, requires outstanding courage—a superhuman courage which comes not from the evangelist's own personal resources, but from his new-found God.

The evangelist is usually received in a friendly manner at first, but this attitude may change over night to one of bitter hostility. If someone dies in the village soon after the evangelist's arrival,

Surrounded by Danger

the heathen will look upon him with suspicion and talk behind his back, accusing him and his family of causing the death of that person. Neighbors from a nearby village will also help kindle the spark of suspicion. This spark may be fanned into flaming hostility with constant danger of attack. Yet the evangelist remains at his post without shrinking. His mighty fortress is his God, a trusty shield and weapon.

This was the experience of Nida, the evangelist at the village of Ikarinagar. Hostility had developed against him in the village and a plot was secretly made against his life. During the night

The Shield of Faith

the people stealthily surrounded his house with the intention of attacking and killing him. Hearing noises outside, he left the house to see what might be causing them. Since it was quite dark he was unable to see anyone. In order to secure a better view he climbed a tree. All of a sudden arrows began to fly. Quickly he jumped down to the ground. At this his would-be murderers, for some reason, ran into the jungle. He returned to his house and spent the remainder of the night without being molested.

At daybreak he called the people of the village together and demanded the reason for their attempt on his life. At first they all denied being guilty. They accused the people of a nearby village of having made the assault. When these were

Impressive Courage

called and questioned about it they, too, denied it. Nida, being quite certain that the attack had been made by the Ikarinagar people, asked, "Why did you intend to kill me? What harm have I done you?" They remained silent. However, when they saw his boldness and realized that he had no intention of leaving them, they finally confessed that they were the guilty ones. They were awe-stricken at the fearlessness of the evangelist. Thereupon they earnestly promised to change for the better and they kept their promise.

THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR

IN THE YEAR 1933 the first evangelist was sent into the Adelbert Mountains by the Nobonob congregation to found a station on the Ramu River side of the divide. In the following year another outpost station was begun near the first one. In 1937 and the following years until I had to leave in 1943, many trips were undertaken and friendship was established with many villages and with different tribes. During those years we were able to place thirteen more evangelists in various villages of that area. Besides these, a number of evangelists were also sent out during these years to work in the Ramu River valley. At the time of my



Evangelists and missionaries treat ulcers like those shown here

departure, mission work in the Adelberts was progressing rapidly. In several villages school work had already been begun and attendance was good, with every child participating.

The first church in the village of Magila, constructed of native material, was dedicated by the evangelists in October 1942. I had been living in that village since April of that year. People from different villages gathered material from the jungle for the building of the church and carried it up the 3000 foot mountain. To obtain the necessary bamboo, they had to go some 1500 feet down the mountain, cross a river, and climb 1500 feet up the side of another mountain to the place where the bamboo grew. The return trip was naturally much more difficult, for then they were loaded down with the bamboo they were carrying home. It was a difficult job, but they did it gladly.

On that other mountain side, at the very spot where they were now cutting bamboo, was the site of what had been a village a few years before. People of various nearby villages had killed the former inhabitants and had enjoyed a cannibal feast. This time they were going for a peaceful purpose, to get materials for the church which they were building. Former enemies, who had by this time become friends through the power of the Gospel, assisted the Magila people in fetching the material.

On the day of the dedication of the church people came from miles around to attend the service. Various chiefs spoke in the meeting, pledging to the mission their own loyalty and that of their people. The inspiration developed in the attending throngs by that meeting produced results which were evident for a long time afterward. People from the villages of Tarina and Jakurun made regular trips for days at a time, visiting the neighboring tribes and telling them about the new way of life. Every evening the Magila children came from their village to the church located on a hill about three minutes' walk from the village compound. There they sang Lutheran hymns and prayed to the Lord

Building a Church

Church Dedication



Confirmation and Baptism October 8, 1939 at Nabouah



First Church at Aiti, Adelbert Mountains

Jesus. Only three years before, their parents had still been engaged in murder and cannibalism.

During a heathen dance festival at the base of the foothills, an old cannibal chief from the Adelbert Mountains, his eyes filled with tears, said to one of the evangelists, "How peacefully you people live! You are clean and have well-kept villages. Your children are happy. Your roads are good and you raise plenty of food in your large gardens. In my village we are all afraid.

"Come over and help us" By night and by day we are in danger of attack by our enemies. They kill our women and children and destroy our gardens. We have to hide in the forest like animals. Please tell your missionary to come and visit us. We, too, would like to have evangelists living with us."

Over twenty villages have been gained by the Nobonob congregation in the Magila area and surrounding vicinity since 1937. Many calls came to us from villages farther back in the mountains, asking that evangelists be sent to them. A continually greater expansion of the work was the thrilling prospect before us when the invasion of Madang by the Japanese in December 1942 stopped our advance among the cannibal tribes. Though further expansion may not have been possible during the war, it is certain that the evangelists, unless removed by force in the course of the war, have remained at their posts, bravely facing all dangers as they continue to proclaim the Word of the Prince of Peace.

After the evangelist has instructed the people for some time they grow eager to assist him. Men whose hearts the Lord has opened in a special way soon begin to address their people and admonish them to follow the new way. Many of them are born orators. It is impressive to hear them speak of their new-found faith. These people become leaders in this new arm of the church of Jesus Christ which God is establishing in New Guinea.

CONCLUSION

THESE ARE THE MIRACULOUS results of the work of your mission among the cannibals of New Guinea. Before the mission came, bringing the Word of God to them, they were in constant war with one another and lived in continuous fear. Now peace reigns among them; they have become one in the Lord and their lives are happy.

To God alone belongs the credit for these glorious results. In His goodness He has seen fit to employ men as His co-laborers. He has chosen the American Lutheran Church to bear His message of peace to these warring savages. Not only the few missionaries on the field are His co-workers; every member of the American Lutheran Church who has ever contributed of his earthly goods, every parent who has sent a son or daughter to serve on the mission field, every person who has ever uttered a prayer for this cause—these all may say, "This is my work. I have a share in it. I am helping *Christ Conquer Cannibals*."

In the light of these results, has your mission work been worth while?

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